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Agenda item 66

Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Motaz M. **Zahran** (Egypt)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 52/33 of 9 December 1997.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 17 September 1998, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 63 to 79, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 12 to 16 and from 19 to 21 October (see A/C.1/53/PV.3–12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 14th to 21st meetings, on 23 and from 27 to 30 October and on 2 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.14–21). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 22nd to 31st meetings, from 3 to 6 and on 9, 10 12 and 13 November (see A/C.1/53/PV.22–31).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament (A/53/202).

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II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.15

5. At the 17th meeting, the representative of India, on behalf of *Bangladesh, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Cuba,* the *Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guyana, India, Indonesia,* the *Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya,* the *Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka* and *Viet Nam*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" (A/C.1.53/L.15).

6. At its 24th meeting, on 5 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.15 by a recorded vote of 77 to 43, with 16 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows:[1]

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen.

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Ukraine, Uruguay.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

[1] The delegation of Jordan subsequently indicated that, had it been present, it would have voted in favour.

Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that scientific and technological developments can have both civilian and military applications and that progress in science and technology for civilian applications needs to be maintained and encouraged,

Concerned that military applications of scientific and technological developments can contribute significantly to the improvement and upgrading of advanced weapon systems and in particular weapons of mass destruction,

Aware of the need to follow closely the scientific and technological developments that may have a negative impact on international security and disarmament, and to channel scientific and technological developments for beneficial purposes,

Cognizant that the international transfers of dual-use as well as high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes are important for the economic and social development of States,

Also cognizant of the need to regulate such transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications through multilaterally negotiated, universally applicable, non-discriminatory guidelines,

Expressing concern over the growing proliferation of ad hoc and exclusive export control regimes and arrangements for dual-use goods and technologies, which tend to impede the economic and social development of developing countries,

Recalling that the Final Document of the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998,[2] noted with concern that undue restrictions on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes persist,

Emphasizing that internationally negotiated guidelines for the transfer of high technology with military applications should take into account the legitimate defence requirements of all States and the requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that access to high-technology products and services and know-how for peaceful purposes is not denied,

1. *Affirms* that scientific and technological progress should be used for the benefit of all mankind to promote the sustainable economic and social development of all States and to safeguard international security, and that international cooperation in the use of science and technology through the transfer and exchange of technological know-how for peaceful purposes should be promoted;

2. *Invites* Member States to undertake additional efforts to apply science and technology for disarmament-related purposes and to make disarmament-related technologies available to interested States;

3. *Urges* Member States to undertake multilateral negotiations with the participation of all interested States in order to establish universally acceptable, non-discriminatory guidelines for international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications;

[2] A/53/667–S/1998/1071, annex I.

4. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament,[3] and requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of the Member States on that report and to make recommendations on the possible approaches to multilaterally negotiated, universally acceptable, non-discriminatory guidelines for international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technologies with military applications, in a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly no later than at its fifty-fourth session;

5. *Encourages* United Nations bodies to contribute, within existing mandates, to promoting the application of science and technology for peaceful purposes;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fourth session the item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament".

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[3] A/53/202